

Applicant: Braud et al.
Application No.: 09/555,555

IN THE CLAIMS

1-31. (Canceled)

32. (Previously presented) A method of testing a compound for biological activity, which method comprises:

- (i) providing cells expressing a CD94/NKG2 receptor, wherein the NKG2 member is selected from the group consisting of NKG2A, NKG2B, NKG2C, NKG2D, NKG2E, and NKG2F at the cell surface;
- (ii) contacting the cells with HLA-E in the presence of the test compound; and
- (iii) determining whether the presence of the compound affects the binding of HLA-E to the cells.

33. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the CD94/NKG2 receptor is an inhibitory NK cell receptor.

34. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the CD94/NKG2 receptor is a stimulatory NK cell receptor.

35. (Canceled)

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36. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 33, wherein the inhibitory CD94/NKG2 receptor is a CD94/NKG2A receptor.

37. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the stimulatory CD94/NKG2 receptor is a CD94/NKG2C receptor.

38-45. (Canceled)

46. (Previously presented) A method of identifying compounds affecting the binding of HLA-E to CD94/NKG2 receptors, which method comprises:

- (i) providing cells expressing a CD94/NKG2 receptor at the cell surface, wherein the NKG2 member is selected from a group consisting of NKG2A, NKG2B, NKG2C, NKG2E, and NKG2F;
- (ii) contacting the cells with HLA-E in the presence of a test compound; and
- (iii) determining whether the presence of the compound affects the binding of HLA-E to the cells.

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47. (Currently amended) The method of claim 46, further comprising using the identified compounds in medical diagnostic procedures, wherein the identified compounds are antibodies.

48. (Canceled)

49. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32, further comprising using compounds that have been determined to affect the binding of HLA-E to the cells in medical diagnostic procedures, wherein the compounds are antibodies.

50. (Currently amended) A method for producing an identified compound having characteristics of affecting the binding of HLA-E to CD94/NKG2 receptors, which method comprises:

- (i) selecting a test compound for screening;
- (ii) providing cells expressing a CD94/NKG2 receptor at the cell surface, wherein the NKG2 member is selected from a group consisting of NKG2A, NKG2B, NKG2C, NKG2E, and NKG2F;
- (iii) contacting the cells with HLA-E in the presence of the test compound; and

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(iv) determining whether the presence of the test compound affects the binding of HLA-E to the cells;

whereby the test compounds which affect the binding of HLA-E to the cells are the identified compounds.

51. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the CD94/NKG2 receptor is a CD94/NKG2B receptor.

52. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the CD94/NKG2 receptor is a CD94/NKG2E receptor.

53. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the CD94/NKG2 receptor is a CD94/NKG2F receptor.

54. (New) The method of claim 46, further comprising using the identified compounds in therapeutic applications, wherein the identified compounds are antibodies.